(c) and (d) Although initially the CVC was requested to get allegations of presence of agents, middlemen, middle companies in major defence deals probed from 1985 onwards, the year in which in the issue was brought into focus, subsequently the date was changed to 1989 as the Government's instructions regarding a total ban on agents, middlemen etc. in the procurement of weapons and weapon systems were issued on 17.4.1989.

Conversion of INS VIkrant as a Museum

† ll0l. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been decided to destroy the INS Vikrant, which played an important role in the Indo-Pak war in 1971 and got Bangladesh liberated, after not succeeding in converting it into a museum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether tenders have invited for the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The State Government of Maharashtra had evinced keen interest in converting INS "Vikrant" into a maritime Museum. Accordingly, it was decided to gift the ship to the State Government for conversion into a museum. However, in April, 2000, the State Government conveyed its inability to implement the scheme. As such, it was decided to dispose of the ship as "Scrap". Tenders for the disposal of the ship were invited accordingly. However, on 4th July, 2000, the State Goverment of Maharashtra have renewed their request for conversion of the ship into a museum. As such, the process initiated for disposal of the ship as "scrap" has been kept in abeyance for the present.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.